

§ 208.7 Agency responsibilities.

(a) An agency shall disclose to each individual who is eligible to receive a Federal benefit, wage, salary, or retirement payment and who is not already receiving payment by electronic funds transfer the individual's rights and obligations under §§ 208.3, 208.4(a) and 208.5 of this part, unless payment by electronic funds transfer is not required pursuant to any provision of subsections (b) through (g) of § 208.4.

(1) Prior to the date the ETASM becomes available, the disclosure shall be in a form substantially similar to the model disclosure set forth in appendix A of this part.

(2) On and after the date the ETASM becomes available, the disclosure shall be in a form substantially similar to the model disclosure set forth in appendix B of this part.

(b) An agency shall put into place procedures that allow recipients to indicate that the recipient elects to have payment deposited by electronic funds transfer to an account held by the recipient at a financial institution. In addition, an agency may put into place procedures to request that individuals who are invoking a hardship waiver under § 208.4(a) indicate, in writing or orally, that a hardship waiver has been invoked. However, an agency may not delay or withhold payment if a recipient does not respond to such a request.

§ 208.8 Recipient responsibilities.

Each recipient who is required to receive payment by electronic funds transfer and who has an account with a financial institution must, within the time frame specified by the agency making the payment, designate a financial institution through which the payment may be made and provide the agency with the information requested by the agency in order to effect payment by electronic funds transfer.

§ 208.9 Compliance.

(a) Treasury will monitor agencies' compliance with this part. Treasury may require agencies to provide information about their progress in converting payments to electronic funds transfer.

(b) If an agency fails to make payment by electronic funds transfer, as

prescribed under this part, Treasury may assess a charge to the agency pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3335.

§ 208.10 Reservation of rights.

The Secretary reserves the right, in the Secretary's discretion, to waive any provision(s) of this regulation in any case or class of cases.

§ 208.11 Accounts for disaster victims.

Treasury may establish and administer accounts at any financial institution designated as a financial agent for disaster victims in order to allow for the delivery by electronic funds transfer of one or more Federal payments. Such accounts may be established upon terms and conditions that the Secretary considers appropriate or necessary in light of the circumstances. Treasury may deliver payments to these accounts notwithstanding any other payment instructions from the recipient and without regard to the requirements of §§ 208.4, 208.6, and 208.7 of this part and 31 CFR 210.5. For purposes of this section, "disaster victim" means an individual or entity located within an emergency area, or an individual or entity that has relocated or been displaced from an emergency area as a result of a major disaster or emergency. "Emergency area" means a geographical area in which there exists an emergency or disaster declared by the President pursuant to the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) or the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.). The maintenance of accounts and the provision of account-related services under this section shall constitute reasonable duties of a financial agent of the United States.

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APPENDIX A TO PART 208—MODEL DISCLOSURE FOR USE UNTIL ETASM BECOMES AVAILABLE

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires that most Federal payments be made by electronic funds transfer after January 2, 1999.

If you are currently receiving your Federal payment by check or you have just become eligible to begin receiving a Federal payment, you have several choices:

(1) Receive your payment by Direct Deposit through the financial institution of your choice.

The Government makes payments electronically through a program called Direct Deposit. Direct Deposit is a safe, convenient, and reliable way to receive your Federal payment through a financial institution. (A financial institution can be a bank, credit union, savings bank, or thrift.) Many financial institutions offer basic, low-cost accounts in addition to full-service checking or savings accounts.

(2) Do nothing now and wait for a basic, low-cost account, called an ETASM, to become available.

If you do not have an account with a financial institution, you do not need to do anything now. In the future a low-cost account, called an ETASM, will be available at many financial institutions. Like Direct Deposit, the ETASM (which stands for electronic transfer account) is a safe, convenient, and reliable way to receive your Federal payment through a financial institution. You are eligible to open this account, at a low monthly fee, if you receive a Federal benefit, wage, salary, or retirement payment. [Agency name] will contact you and let you know when the ETASM is available and which financial institutions in your area offer the account.

(3) Continue to receive a check.

If receiving your payment electronically would cause you a hardship because you have a physical or mental disability, or because of a geographic, language, or literacy barrier, you may receive your payment by check. In addition, if receiving your payment electronically would cause you a financial hardship because it would cost you more than receiving your payment by check, you may receive your payment by check.

Please call [agency name] at [agency customer service number] if you would like more information on Direct Deposit, the ETASM, or hardship waivers.

APPENDIX B TO PART 208—MODEL DISCLOSURE FOR USE AFTER ETASM BECOMES AVAILABLE

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires that most Federal payments be made by electronic funds transfer after January 2, 1999.

If you are currently receiving your Federal payment by check or you have just become eligible to begin receiving a Federal payment, you have several choices:

(1) Receive your payment by Direct Deposit through the financial institution of your choice.

The Government makes payments electronically through a program called Direct Deposit. Direct Deposit is a safe, convenient, and reliable way to receive your Federal pay-

ment through a financial institution. (A financial institution can be a bank, credit union, savings bank, or thrift.) Many financial institutions offer basic, low-cost accounts in addition to full-service checking or savings accounts.

(2) Receive your payment through a basic, low-cost account called an ETASM.

If you receive a Federal benefit, wage, salary, or retirement payment, you are eligible to open an ETASM. This account is available for a low monthly fee at many financial institutions. Like Direct Deposit, the ETASM (which stands for electronic transfer account) is a safe, convenient, and reliable way to receive your Federal payment through a financial institution. Please call the customer service number listed below to find out which financial institutions in your area offer the ETASM.

(3) Continue to receive a check.

If receiving your payment electronically would cause you a hardship because you have a physical or mental disability, or because of a geographic, language, or literacy barrier, you may receive your payment by check. In addition, if receiving your payment electronically would cause you a financial hardship because it would cost you more than receiving your payment by check, you may receive your payment by check.

Please call [agency name] at [agency customer service number] if you would like more information on Direct Deposit, the ETASM, or hardship waivers.

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